

Different Situations Call for Different Responses

The dominant methodological concern and presupposition of twentieth century biblical scholarship is the historical-critical method. Among the many contributions of this method is the insight that all New Testament documents were written by the early church for its own needs.

In other words, the New Testament texts were written to specific audiences who had concrete concerns and problems. Matthew is different from Mark precisely because the needs of his congregation are different from those of Mark's, and thus the gospel must be actualized and conceptualized in a new way.

Similarly, Paul's letter to the Galatians is different from that sent to the Corinthians because the actual situations of the two congregations are different: the Corinthians must be warned against an arrogant individualism and the Galatians against reversion to a Spirit crippling nomism. Different situations call for different responses.

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